

The thoughts and prayers of Congress are with the families and loved ones of those lost on BP's oil rig in the Gulf of Mexico.

Since the Deepwater Horizon rig explosion on April 20th, military and civilian authorities have been working around the clock to respond to the disaster and mitigate the oil spill. [Learn more about the ongoing Administration-wide response»](#)

CONGRESSIONAL ACTION

While federal regulators are investigating the causes of the incident to make sure this does not happen again, Congress is also investigating the causes of the explosion, including the adequacy of the companies' safety and emergency response measures, and conducting oversight of the recovery efforts.

- Energy & Commerce Committee
 - [Energy and Commerce Subcommittee Announces Hearing on the Deepwater Horizon Rig Oil Spill»](#)
 - [Energy and Commerce Committee Requests Information on Halliburton's Cementing Activities at the Deepwater Horizon Rig»](#)
 - [Energy and Commerce Committee Requests Documents on Blowout Preventer»](#)
 - [Energy and Commerce Committee Seeks Details on Functioning of Blowout Preventer & Other Safety Measures in the Deepwater Horizon Rig Oil Spill»](#)
 - [Energy and Commerce Committee Investigates Adequacy of Environmental Response Plan in Deepwater Horizon Oil Rig Explosion»](#)
 - [Chairmen Waxman and Stupak request information from BP America & Transocean»](#)
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- Natural Resources Committee
 - [Will hold oversight hearings on May 26 and May 27 to examine the Administration's OCS oil and gas strategy and the implications of the explosion»](#)
 - [Dispatched staff members to the Gulf to monitor federal response efforts»](#)
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- Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
 - [Will hold a hearing on May 19 on oil spill prevention, response measures and natural resource impacts»](#)

With estimates that the oil spill may be the costliest in American history, [House Democrats have introduced legislation](#) to protect taxpayers from paying the cost and ensure that oil companies are held accountable. The [Big Oil Bailout Prevention Act](#) would:

- Raise the liability cap for offshore oil well spills from \$75 million to \$10 billion.
- Eliminate the \$1 billion per incident cap on claims against the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund and allow community responders to access the fund for preparation and mitigation up front, rather than waiting for reimbursement later.
- Allow claimants to collect from future revenues of the fund, with interest, if damages claims exceed the amount in the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund (currently \$1.6 billion).
- Eliminate the \$500 million cap on natural resources damages.

RESOURCES & LINKS

Contact Information

- To report oiled wildlife, call 1-866-557-1401. Messages will be checked hourly.
- To report oiled shoreline, call 1-866-448-5816.
- To report spill-related damage, call 1-800-440-0858.
- To file a claim, call BP's helpline at 1-800-440-0858. A BP fact sheet with additional information is available [here](#). For those who have already pursued the BP claims process and are not satisfied with BP's resolution, can call the Coast Guard at 1-800-280-7118. More information about what types of damages are eligible for compensation under the Oil Pollution Act as well as guidance on procedures to seek that compensation can be found [here](#).

Volunteering

The Deepwater Horizon Response Center has set up several lines:

- To submit alternative response technology, services or products, call 281-366-5511
- To submit your vessel as a vessel of opportunity skimming system, call 281-366-5511
- To volunteer, call 1-866-448-5816 or find a state specific volunteer opportunity:
 - [Louisiana»](#)
 - [Mississippi»](#)
 - [Florida»](#)
 - [Alabama»](#)

Websites

- [The Administration's coordinated response effort website has the latest news»](#)
- [Updates on the ongoing efforts on WhiteHouse.gov»](#)
- [Select Committee on Energy and Independence & Global Warming resource web page»](#)
- [Energy and Commerce Committee investigation web page»](#)
- [EPA's information about validated environmental air and water sampling results»](#)
- [NOAA Fisheries Service on impact to fishing and closures»](#)
- [Minerals Management Service»](#)
- [Fish and Wildlife Service updates»](#)
- [NASA imagery of the oil spill from space»](#)

